



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

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Legislative Analyst

Alok Bhatt

Dear Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and esteemed members of the Education Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Alok Bhatt. I serve as Legislative Analyst for the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission.

In supporting educational equity for Connecticut's culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse student population, APAAC writes in strong support of Senate Bill 379: An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Minority Teacher Recruitment Task Force.

APAAC believes that a community's educators should reflect its student body. Although hiring and retention practices should avoid segregating a school district, students should feel as though they share important life experiences and perspectives with their teachers. Some research indicates that students actually learn better when they have a teacher of the same color. Furthermore, recruiting minority teachers signifies one step towards reversing the social, economic, and cultural isolation that has historically oppressed black, Latino, Asian, and native communities¹.

Considering the above, APAAC submits that the Minority Teacher Recruitment Task Force also include the Executive Director or designee of the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission (APAAC). Asian Pacific Americans (APA) represent nearly 5% of the US population, yet only 1.2% of educators in public schools²³. Many of our state's 25,000 APA students experience linguistic isolation, as our public school districts lack English Learner programs for lower-diffusion languages⁴.

The Hartford Public School district alone educates students who trace their origins to the Arabian Peninsula, Burma, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam, and other world regions of Asia and the Pacific⁵. To truly promote educational equity, the Minority Teacher Recruitment Task Force must acknowledge and address these populations. APA students are teachers are also people of color; we must not let the 'model minority' myth or broad interpretations of Census data confuse this

¹ <http://www.shankerinstitute.org/blog/recruiting-and-retaining-educators-color>

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

³ https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_209.10.asp

⁴ <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/expressTables.aspx>

⁵ http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct_report/ElIDTVViewer.aspx

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understanding.

I thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Alok Bhatt
Legislative Analyst, APAAC

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